

State of South Dakota

SEVENTY-EIGHTH SESSION LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 2003

390I0160

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 2

Introduced by: Senator Vitter and Representative Lintz

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION, Supporting an appeal of certain federal management plans
2 for the Nebraska National Forest and associated national grasslands in Nebraska and South
3 Dakota.

4 WHEREAS, the United States Forest Service issued a Final Environmental Impact
5 Statement and Land and Resource Management Plan (FEIS) in July 2001, for the Nebraska
6 National Forest and the associated national grasslands in Nebraska and South Dakota; and

7 WHEREAS, the national grasslands associated with the Nebraska National Forest for
8 administrative purposes include the Buffalo Gap National Grasslands, the Fort Pierre National
9 Grasslands in South Dakota, and the Oglala National Grasslands in Nebraska; and

10 WHEREAS, Fall River, Custer, Pennington, and Jackson counties submitted substantial and
11 substantive recommendations for the FEIS during the comment period allowed by the United
12 States Forrest Service; and

13 WHEREAS, Rick Cables, Rocky Mountain Regional Forester, signed the Record of
14 Decision (ROD) for the Nebraska National Forest Final Environmental Impact Statement and
15 Land and Resource Management Plan on July 31, 2002; and

16 WHEREAS, the ROD failed to adopt and address the vast majority of the substantive



1 recommendations made by Fall River, Custer, Pennington, and Jackson counties; and

2 WHEREAS, Fall River, Custer, Pennington, and Jackson counties in South Dakota; Dawes
3 and Sioux counties in Nebraska; the Black Hills Multiple Use Coalition; the South Dakota
4 Stockgrowers Association; the Cottonwood, Pioneer, Sugarloaf, Central South Dakota, White
5 River, Eastern Pennington, and Indian Creek Grazing Districts; and numerous individuals and
6 businesses holding permits for use of the Nebraska National Forest and associated grasslands
7 have formed the Nebraska National Forest Plans Revision Appeal Coalition (Coalition); and

8 WHEREAS, the purpose of the Nebraska National Forest Plans Revision Appeal Coalition
9 is to seek the administrative review of the ROD by the United States Department of Agriculture.
10 The Coalition believes the Forest Service has not adequately addressed the potential adverse
11 environmental and economic impacts the land and people of the region will sustain. The
12 Coalition also believes the ROD will enhance the risk of wildfire, as the ROD calls for increased
13 fuel loads and limitations on access for fire suppression on thousands of acres of the grasslands.
14 The ROD makes no definitive provisions for any control of the prairie dog population and
15 colonization of adjacent private property; and

16 WHEREAS, the ROD designates thousands of acres for the purpose of creating large,
17 concentrated prairie dog complexes, containing thousands of prairie dogs. Large, concentrated
18 prairie dog complexes have facilitated sylvatic and bubonic plague epidemics, decimating prairie
19 dog populations in those areas; and

20 WHEREAS, from 1960 through 2001, thirty-three human cases of plague in the United
21 States were, according to the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention,
22 positively linked with prairie dogs or their fleas, and four of those were fatal; and

23 WHEREAS, the Coalition believes that large, concentrated prairie dog populations are a
24 threat to the health of the region's prairie dog, wildlife, and domestic animal populations and

1 potentially to the health of the area's human population:

2 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Senate of the Seventy-eighth Legislature
3 of the State of South Dakota, the House of Representatives concurring therein, that the South
4 Dakota Legislature supports the administrative appeal initiated by the Nebraska National Forest
5 Plans Revision Appeal Coalition; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Legislature respectfully requests
7 Governor Mike Rounds, Senator Tom Daschle, Senator Tim Johnson, and Representative
8 William Janklow to request that the Undersecretary of the United States Department of
9 Agriculture conduct a full administrative review of the ROD and that the Coalition be given the
10 opportunity to make a verbal presentation of the appeal issued to the undersecretary.